



# GROUNDCOVER

NEWS AND SOLUTIONS FROM THE GROUND UP

August 2012 VOLUME 3 ISSUE 8

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**“On some level,  
I am also homeless”  
The Dalai Lama – p.5**





## Failures of justice



by Susan Beckett  
Publisher

As the state Legislature is evaluating a series of reforms to address the shortfalls in the justice system for indigent defendants, one of our own writer-vendors is snared in the system as it currently [mis]functions.

La Shawn has languished in jail for three months awaiting trial, unable to come up with the bail set at \$10,000 and unable to afford a paid attorney who will take her case seriously. While the details cannot be discussed since the case is still pending, La Shawn would like Groundcover readers to understand the predicament in which she finds herself.

She says, "I can utilize this experience to show how the justice system serves as a disadvantage to the poor and low-income people who face criminal charges, are held in jail, and lose everything they own because they cannot post bond, when we are supposed to be innocent until proven guilty.

"I've acquired a criminal charge because of my lack of housing [and an incident that occurred at a place she was crashing] ... I had some things going for me before this. I was selling Groundcover and taking part in a financial program... These are optimal months to be working as an outdoor vendor. I can work longer hours and earn much needed money if I can post a \$1,000 bond. I don't have access to a phone or phone numbers to a bail bondsman from jail, and I can't help myself like this. I'm about to lose things that cannot be replaced that are in my storage."

La Shawn maintains her innocence,

though at one point she was willing to accept a plea that did not involve jail time so she could be reunited with her young child, even though it would have left her with a criminal record that would further compromise her ability to get a decent job. When the offer was formally presented, it included more jail time and La Shawn rejected it.

Her frustration with the public defenders is expressed in her poem printed below. She asserts that none of the three attorneys who have been assigned to her over a 38-day period have even taken the time to meet with her and hear her side of the story.

La Shawn is trying to stay positive and productive, primarily by writing, but even that has been stymied. She has no access to a computer or internet and she says, "I'm also authoring my first book, but that has been put on hold; I don't even have paper to write on. They give you an envelope and two pieces

of paper every so often (thank God for that!). Other than that, it is a barbaric existence."

Commenting on the public defense situation, Governor Snyder recently stated, "I appreciate the commission for developing its recommendations to help overcome the decades-long challenges that have impeded Michigan's public defense system. I look forward to working with the Legislature to ensure that all criminal defendants, regardless of ability to pay, receive effective legal representation in our state."

We commend the governor and the Legislature for taking action. But what of La Shawn and the many others whose lives have been wrecked? If you would like to help La Shawn in some way, please contact the Groundcover staff at [contact@groundcovernews.com](mailto:contact@groundcovernews.com) or leave us a message at (734) 972-0926.

### GROUNDCOVER MISSION:

*Groundcover News exists to create opportunity and a voice for low-income people while taking action to end homelessness and poverty.*

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## Whose Plea Bargain? No Bargain!

*(The following poem is written from personal accounts and shared knowledge. It does not apply to all public defenders. No offense meant; I just want to share my experience. - L.)*

by La Shawn Courtwright

It's only a self-sealed fate!  
What choice do you have?  
The what seems for that time, to be the lesser of two evils...  
It's gone come back to haunt you, jus when things begin to look up...  
One more smack in the face!  
Too late to change it now, another so-called conviction got no choice.  
Take a bite from either the one-headed or the two-headed snake.  
Some Public Defenders! Are you kiddin? A lot of them are fake!  
A two-bit a\*\* Public Defender, before even speaking with you; done already made the deal before you approach the bench.  
They make you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothin but the truth  
..Then you find yo'self coppin' pleas to lies...  
For your freedom, which is on the line!  
They're only creating under the color of the law, a record of forced convictions on you.  
What kind of shi\* is this? It damn sho' aint justice, yo' freedom has now become more of a compromise; under the guise; color of law!  
Don't git me wrong, not all Public Defenders are bad.  
Then again, it may depend on what yo' charge or more likely what charges you face...  
They don't really care about you,  
Specially if their reputation is at stake!  
When you're poor; can't post yo' bail...  
Or hire a paid attorney who may be a lil more willin to fight for you tooth and nail,  
You run the risk of losin everything you own or things you can't replace  
like yo' family pictures; a job; or even yo' mind...  
While you and yo' gifts rot in a jail cell!  
Once again all your dreams; plans; postponed; canceled-out by a so-called justice system that serves "you" only as a pit of snares.  
It's not easy to climb higher when there's something underneath you that they won't let stay in your past,  
Keeps being used, pullin you back down,  
Don't know how long this gone last!  
Thankful that I'm self-employed.  
How many jobs can one person replace?  
Our economy is in a job-market crash!  
They don't really know "me," who I really am!  
"Their" documented reports; trumped-up convictions decharacterize my person...  
It's a bullshi\* legal sham!  
They expect me to be rational, while these are the tactics used to take away everything that I Love...  
My family; new-found career, I feel so misunderstood  
I wish I knew how to tell you how this feels.  
Even so, I still don't think you'd get the real deal!  
I want to EXPLODE, I'm gone BLOW-UP one day!  
It's a silent EXPLOSION, the kind bringin success not DISMAY!  
SEE!  
Just right there, you almost got me wrong again...  
I'm too strong fa' dat, my brain too thick, great thoughts "I think" my friend!  
It's already past the dura and skull which is not big enough for it to fit in...  
How can I contain all this Knowledge within!

## So what is the opportunity?



by Rev. Dr. Martha Brunell  
Pastor, Bethlehem  
United Church of Christ

Once every four years in the United Church of Christ, there is an energetic and energizing gathering known as the National Youth Event (NYE). The most recent NYE took place at Purdue University July 10-14, 2012 and 10 people from Bethlehem UCC attended. One of the things they brought home with them was a tagline from the final worship service: *If you make an observation, you have an obligation.* When this was repeated to me, I responded with a related question: *So what is your opportunity?* Observation provokes obligation which opens up opportunity.

Two years ago now, there were people in Ann Arbor and throughout Washtenaw County who made multiple

observations regarding the large issue of homelessness and its associated realities. That community of people felt the stirring of an obligation. And then that sense of obligation flowered into the opportunity we know as Groundcover News. For me, as critical as the observation and obligation are, the story is really told in the actual opportunity that emerges.

Regarding such opportunity, I am going to repeat a few wise words from Rachel Naomi Remen, MD. She is well-known in Relationship-Centered Medicine and Medical Education. Her two books, *Kitchen Table Wisdom* and *My Grandfather's Blessings*, are treasured in 21 languages. Some of her work focuses on the distinctions between helping, fixing and serving. About these distinctions, she has written:

*Helping, fixing and serving represent three different ways of seeing life. When you help, you see life as weak. When you fix, you see life as broken. When*

*you serve, you see life as whole. ... When we help, we become aware of our own strength. But when we serve, we don't serve with our strength; we serve with ourselves, and we draw from all of our experiences. Our limitations serve; our wounds serve; even our darkness can serve. ... Serving makes us aware of our wholeness and its power. The wholeness in us serves the wholeness in others and the wholeness in life.*

One of my sure routes to acknowledging my own wholeness is through writing. Each month when I write this column, I am coming from a different location in myself. I imagine that those of you who read my articles regularly have a fuller and fuller sense of who I am month after month. As I sit down to write, I try to keep in mind everyone engaged in the life of Groundcover News in all of our ups

and downs. My intent is to capture the Groundcover spirit – which is much more one of service than one of helping or fixing. A perspective of service takes substantial time and care. It is a perspective of partnership and mutuality. I appreciate repeatedly the opportunity to bring all of who I am to this challenging and joyful work. Whenever serving, I always know that I am receiving as much as if not more than I am giving. And so to all of you out there, thank you for this rich opportunity to serve.

I would encourage each one of us to keep on keeping on with the Groundcover community across varied circumstances. We can be ever-observant of the wholeness in us that obliges us to touch the wholeness in others and in life itself. What an opportunity that is!



### Bethlehem United Church of Christ

423 S. Fourth Avenue, Ann Arbor, MI 48104  
(between William and Packard)  
[www.bethlehem-ucc.org](http://www.bethlehem-ucc.org) (734) 665-6149

Bethlehem Church is home for the  
Groundcover Office

#### Sundays:

8:30 am and 10:00 am ~ Worship  
10:00 am ~ Church School

#### Upcoming Events:

August 5 ~ Heritage Sunday  
(Celebrating 178 years of serving God  
Holy Communion at both services)  
August 19 ~ Radio Fund Fundraiser  
At Knight's Restaurant  
(Broadcast live on 1600AM 5:00 to 7:00 pm)  
August 31 ~ Parking Lot Pretzels  
(Sale begins at noon)

an invitation to grow in spirit and serve with joy

### Affordable housing in Ann Arbor: put the money where the mouth is

Dear Groundcover,

Back in 1992, the Homeless Action Committee staged a 66-day homeless encampment on the northeast corner of Ann and Main. All the usual public safety concerns were voiced against us, plus the absurd charge that the only truly homeless were bused in from Detroit.

While Ann Arbor does have many features of good ethical living, the continuing shortage of economically accessible housing open to all stands starkly beside repeated attempts to eliminate all government spending that aids economically marginalized people. True democracy can only exist in a society which also strives for greater human equality!

Sincerely,  
Paul Lambert



### Ann Arbor Democratic Party

Learn more about our events at:

[www.annarbordems.org](http://www.annarbordems.org)

Check the website for details  
about the Labor Day Picnic!



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## An unlikely hero

by Susan Beckett

Those who knew him in his younger days would hardly expect Groundcover vendor Greg Owens to be returning money and helping out strangers. Yet, Greg has quickly established himself as a top-seller of Groundcover and a man on a mission to change his life.

Sitting at the tables at the corner of 4th and Catherine and enjoying smoothies with her kids, Kelly Michaels Soluk put down her purse and took in her surroundings. Amidst the others who were eating and talking, she noticed a man sleeping on a nearby bench. When she returned home, she realized with horror that she had forgotten her purse.

She went back to the Smoothie King area, hoping her pocket book would still be at the table where she left it. Disappointed, she looked around, in case it had been moved. She peeked into a nearby pile of belongings, thinking it might be in there. The owner, Groundcover vendor Peggy who was selling at the nearby People's Food Co-op, asked her if she needed help.

As Kelly told her the story, Greg, who was working with Peggy, jumped up



Greg Owens helped reunite Kelly Michaels Soluk, shown above, with her pocketbook.

and exclaimed, "I know that guy who was sleeping on the bench!"

Greg leaped on his moped and went to a nearby park where he found the man in question and the purse. The man told Greg there had been \$20 in the purse and gave him a \$20 bill which Greg returned to Kelly along with the pocketbook and the rest of its contents intact.

Though Kelly noted that there had been considerably more than \$20 in cash, she said, "There was so much more valuable in there than the money." In fact, she tried to give the \$20 back to Greg.

Greg knew from personal experience how important the credit cards and driver's license would be.

"It took me 99 days to get my ID when I

got out of prison for a DUI. Now I don't drink, period. I wear an alcohol tether that is so sensitive that if I wear the wrong deodorant or get gas on my skin while I'm working on an engine, even that registers.

"I'm done with drinking; period! Drinking, my whole life, I've been in and out of jail. I'm not giving anyone any more time. I'm done. It's time for me to enjoy life."

As a man coming out of prison and still on parole, Greg doesn't look at himself as a hero, but as a man simply doing the right thing.

"I got so much backing behind me because I'm trying to do the right thing... The police officers, my parole officers, they bend over backwards for me," he says. "It's about doing the right thing, okay? I owe it to God. He gave me the opportunity."

"The money isn't important but the purse and its contents are more valuable to me," said Kelly. "He was so helpful. They both were."

## AUGUST CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**August 1-26 – Education Project for Homeless Youth Supply Drive**, 9 a.m. - 8 p.m. (M-TH); 9-5 (F). Support Washtenaw County students who are living in homeless and temporary situations by donating school supplies. Needed items include backpacks, binders, highlighters, protractors, rulers, compasses, travel-size toiletries. *Please note: Pencils, blue and black pens, and crayons are not needed.* Ozone House, 1705 Washtenaw Avenue, Ann Arbor. More info: (734) 662-2265.

**August 4 – Groundcover volunteer meeting**, 10:30-noon. Bethlehem UCC Gallery Room, 423 S. 4th Avenue, Ann Arbor. More info: email contact@groundcovernews.com or call (734) 972-0926.

**August 7/14/21/28 – Tuesday Résumé Clinics**, 9-11 a.m. Learn how to construct a résumé and receive professional advice and editing. Washtenaw County Michigan Works! Career Transition Center, Key Bank Building, 2nd Floor, 301 West Michigan Avenue, Ypsilanti. More info: call (734) 544-6799; TDD (800) 649-3777.

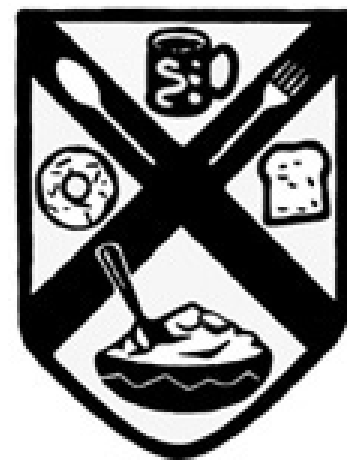
**August 17 – "Peace Generator" Monthly World-Healing Peace Circle**, 7-9 p.m. Join others from all walks of life in silent prayer or focused meditation toward peace, understanding, joy, and healing for

your family, the world, and yourself. Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth, 704 Airport Boulevard, Ann Arbor. More info: [www.peacegenerator.org](http://www.peacegenerator.org) or email [info@peacegenerator.org](mailto:info@peacegenerator.org).

**August 17-19 – Ypsilanti Heritage Festival**, 12-8 p.m. (Fri), 10-8 (Sat), 11-6 (Sun). Celebration of Ypsilanti's history and culture features live entertainment by local artists and community groups, beer garden and casino, and children's area. Riverside Park, 1 West Cross Street, Ypsilanti. More info: [www.ypsilantiheritagefestival.com](http://www.ypsilantiheritagefestival.com), or email [YpsHeritageFest@gmail.com](mailto:YpsHeritageFest@gmail.com).

**August 18 – Buy Local and Meet the Local Producers Event**, 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Meet local entrepreneur vendors and learn their stories. Taste the delicious products they produce locally. Whole Foods Market, 3135 Washtenaw Ave., Ann Arbor. More info: (734) 975-4500.

**August 25 – 2012 Parkridge Summer Festival and Joe Dulin Community Day**, 11 a.m. - 8:30 p.m. This first joint festival of the two previously separate events will feature a car show, food, live local music, and information booths with information regarding free and low-cost programs and services in Ypsilanti. Parkridge Park, 591 Armstrong Drive, Ypsilanti. More info: [www.parkridgecommunitycenter.org](http://www.parkridgecommunitycenter.org) or call (734) 483-7700.



**The Breakfast  
at St. Andrew's**  
celebrates 30 years  
on August 16, 2012.

Many thanks to all our guests,  
volunteers and benefactors.

## His Holiness the Dalai Lama: a street paper exclusive

by Danielle Batist  
INSP Contributor

*One of the greatest spiritual leaders of our time, His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama travels the world to spread his message of peace and reconciliation. During his recent UK tour themed "Be the Change," the now 77-year old Dalai Lama gave an exclusive interview to the International Network of Street Papers, of which Groundcover News is a member. The interview and extraordinary photo shoot are printed simultaneously in street papers worldwide.*

**Q: Many of our 12,000 street paper vendors in 40 countries around the world are or have been homeless. The Buddha was homeless for the biggest part of his life, and you, like many of your people, have spent most of your life in exile. What does homelessness mean to you?**

A: For people without a home, it is almost like they have no basis from which to conduct their lives. They have no anchor. That is very sad. But from a larger viewpoint, I would say that this whole planet is our home. The individual may be in a difficult situation, but he is still part of the society of humanity. I think it is innate to human nature that if someone is going through a difficult time, there is some kind of willingness to help out of a sense of concern that we have. So from that viewpoint, for homeless people their direct home is no longer there, but the big home is still there. So people who are homeless should not feel desperate. On some level, I am also homeless. But being homeless sometimes is useful, because you realize that in many places you can find a new home. If you have just one home, in some way you can get stuck in that.

**Q: In recent years we have seen within the street paper movement many new people becoming vendors as a result of the global recession. People haven't enough money to live on or they lose their jobs and end up on the streets. What do you feel about austerity measures introduced by governments to tackle the crisis?**

A: This is a very complicated situation. Immediately, I think governments have the responsibility for the country as a whole, so sometimes maybe these measures are necessary. But if you take an overall view, the real causes of the present difficulties started with the past

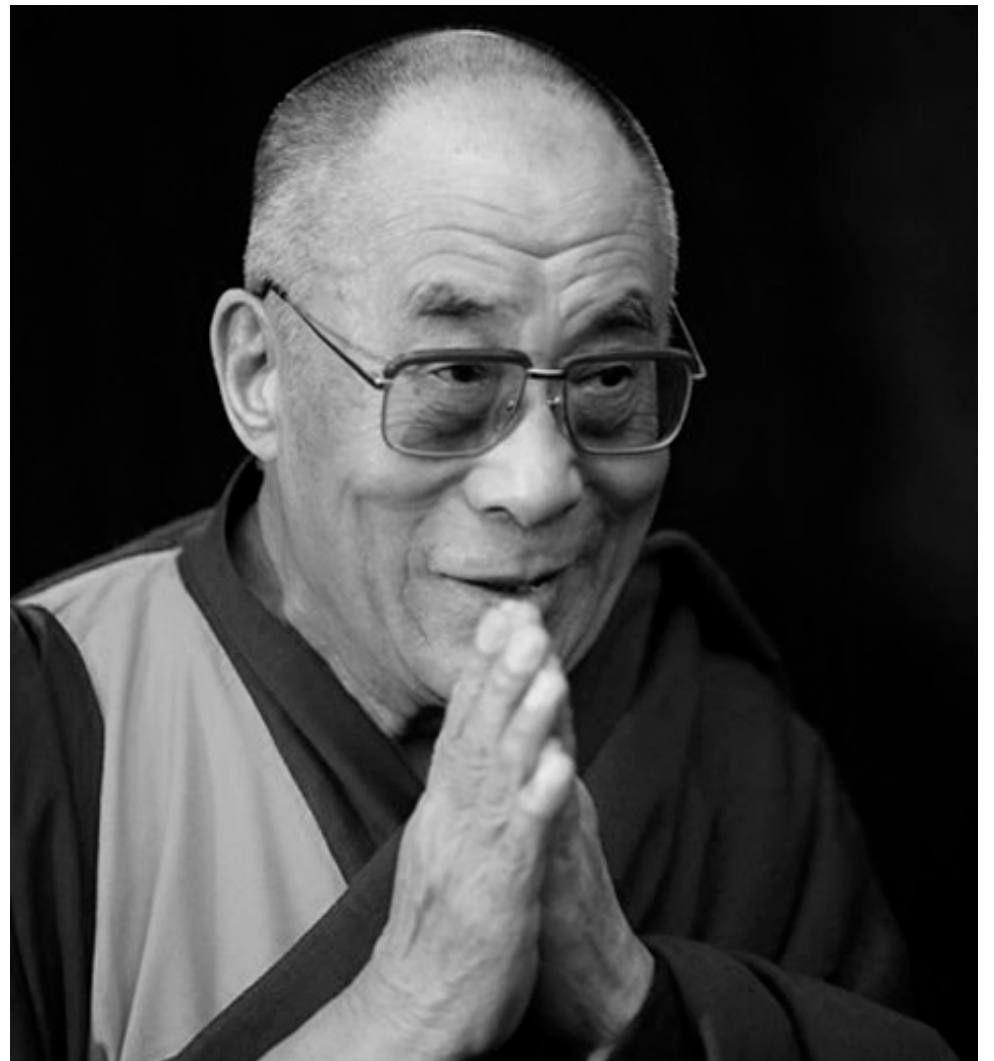
governments and some companies. I think, without a proper plan in place, they are simply concerned about immediate profit and are not concerned about the long-term consequences. From that level, of course not seeing it from an individual person, but government or organizations which have the responsibility, the results now are due to their own actions. Only now, when difficulties have come, they put some sort of restrictions in place. It is complicated. Either way, for thousands of people, their livelihood is almost zero, which is really very, very sad. Very sad. But then, how to handle these things, I don't know.

Two or three years ago, one newspaper, I think in Mexico, reported of one family that, because of the economic difficulties, had to abandon their dog. The dog was now truly homeless. There was a picture of the dog and he looked very sad. Now really nobody took care of him. When I saw that picture, I myself almost felt some kind of hopelessness. Taking that to a human level, you can certainly see how life has become more difficult.

However, whenever I meet people who are in a difficult situation, I always share with them that, in spite of a lot of difficulties, as a human being you should keep self-confidence and work hard. Due to certain difficulties, if you completely lost your self-confidence, hope and will, then inevitably difficulty will continue and it will lead to real disaster. So it is very, very essential to keep hope and determination.

**Q: You have often said about your own situation that it is important to keep hope. In your autobiography you write that as far back as in 1953, you were convinced that "no matter how bad things become, they will eventually get better." Given the current situation in Tibet, how do you succeed in that?**

A: In my own case, at age sixteen, I lost my freedom. Difficulties had already started. Then, at 24, I lost my own country. Over the last 52 years, there have been a lot of problems. The news from within our own country has mostly been very heart-breaking news, very sad. In the meantime, Tibetans have put their trust in me, trust and hope. I cannot do much, so sometimes I really feel hopeless and desperate. But then, as I mentioned earlier, it is much better to keep my own enthusiasm and optimistic attitude, rather than allowing



The always-gracious Dalai Lama makes a point as he speaks of the importance of maintaining hope, self-confidence and determination.

myself to completely lose hope and demoralize. That is of no help. So to other people I also say that no matter what difficulties, we should keep our self-confidence and determination.

**Q: When people fall upon such hard times, including in your country, how do you manage not to let feelings of anger, frustration or hatred take over?**

A: Our emotion is a master-check through our intelligence. On an intellectual level, we analyze each situation. If a situation is as such that we can overcome it, there is no need to worry. If there is no way to overcome a situation, there also is no use in too much worrying, as usually worry brings frustration and frustration brings anger. It is therefore always better to try not to worry too much. The emotion itself cannot do that, but with the help of human intelligence we can do that. I think whether God-created or nature-created, emotions are sometimes very troublesome. So God or nature also provided us with a kind of counter-balance, which is human intelligence. When [non-human] animals face a problem, they almost crash and black-out. But us human beings, because of our intelligence, we have a way to judge and measure our response. That is my view.

**Q: In your autobiography, *Freedom in Exile*, you blame the Chinese state media for misleading the people by grossly misrepresenting the situation in Tibet from the 1950s onwards. How important is the role of independent media in today's society?**

A: Independent media are extremely important. The media, as I see it, are almost like a third eye. Now, sometimes the third eye itself is a little bit biased [laughs]. That is a problem. If media first objectively analyze and then report and make a story known to people, their role is extremely helpful and very effective. When I meet media people, I tell them that they should have a long nose and investigate all sides; not just the front side, but also behind. They must undertake thorough investigation to find out what the reality is. People have every right to know the reality, particularly in democratic countries. Media should undertake full investigations, present their findings objectively, without a biased view, and then inform the public. If they work this way, they have a very important and great role to play.

**Q: INSP street papers often cover**

see DALAI LAMA, page 11



# Delivering the diagnosis: a medical intern discusses diabetes with a patient

by Sarah H. Arshad  
Groundcover Contributor

I reviewed his history from the available electronic medical record. But as I walked into my patient's room, I had some trouble meeting his gaze. I knew it boiled down to cowardice, but as a trainee, I used my inexperience as a crutch for my own mess of emotions, for my fluttering heart and suddenly dry mouth.

Sure, they teach you many facts and skills in medical school. As a preclinical student I learned about the pathophysiology of diabetes, the laboratory tests used to diagnose it, and how to proceed with treatment. I was taught about the effects of diabetes on a patient's overall health, and its association with reduced life expectancy. But learning these facts, and then teaching them to a patient to whom you are about to break the bad news of a new diagnosis, are two completely different experiences.

It is important to test for type 2, or insulin-resistant diabetes, in patients considered "at risk." This includes patients who are overweight, whose family members have the disease, or who belong to an ethnic subgroup more

likely to suffer from the disease. Some patients will present with complaints of being unusually thirsty, urinating more, and losing weight despite a seemingly healthy appetite. These patients are sent

for laboratory testing for a fasting blood sugar level; this will check what the body's sugar content in the bloodstream is after not eating for at least 6-8 hours, usually when patients first wake up in the morning. The magic number is 126: below this is considered safe, though the closer they are to it, the more patients are considered "pre-diabetic" – that is, working their way towards developing the disease. If the lab value is greater than 126, the positive diagnosis is made.

Normally, when we have not eaten for a few hours, our blood sugar will be below that magic number of 126. Our pancreas makes insulin, a hormone which allows the sugar in our blood, from the food we eat, to be used in our muscles and by our organs. Some children develop diabetes when they are little because their pancreases do



not make insulin; they have type 1 diabetes, and need insulin replacement therapy to survive. People who develop type 2 diabetes, usually individuals who are older and overweight, still make insulin,

but their bodies cannot use it well; the sugar remains in the bloodstream instead of being used by the rest of the body. This is what leads to the symptoms mentioned: they lose weight because the sugar isn't being incorporated by the body, and all the sugar in the bloodstream causes the patient to become thirstier, as their body tries to dilute it.

At first, this may sound great – who doesn't love the idea of losing weight? But there are problems: because these patients cannot use the sugar in their bloodstream, they are often very tired. Over time, they can develop many other problems, including heart disease, trouble with their vision and kidneys, infections, constipation, and pain. In addition, over time, some patients can no longer feel their feet, which can lead to ulcers and eventually gangrene, and require amputations. In the long run, diabetes (of either type) is a very serious illness, and needs to be treated.

Treatment at first consists of lifestyle modification. This means patients need to work on improving their diets and taking on an exercise regime, with the eventual goal of weight loss. This involves eating fewer high-calorie, fatty, sugary foods, and eating more fresh vegetables. In addition, if patients do not exercise normally, they should begin to incorporate daily walks into their lives, eventually moving up to more strenuous exercise, when they can tolerate it. These changes should be made slowly but steadily, and are the most effective way to start. Any weight loss can help, and significant lifestyle modification can even reverse the diagnosis! In addition, a variety of medications can help; patients should see a physician for more details.

So, I walked into my patient's room, armed with this knowledge, but nervous about beginning the conversation. I was not practiced in the art of telling patients about serious illnesses, and reminding them that my role as a soon-to-be healthcare provider was to provide resources and reassurance; that we would tackle his diabetes as partners, and that he would not be alone with the diagnosis. Though I may have stumbled over my words, at first, and though I was not as confident and supportive as one may have hoped, I saw that, in the end, he trusted me to help him. Indeed, that is all I could have asked for.



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Offer expires 08/31/2012



## Creating opportunity with Shifting Code

by Susan Beckett

In cooperation with Michigan Works and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation's Shifting Gears initiative, nonprofit business incubator Ann Arbor SPARK launched a program in February to screen and train talent for technology companies in Washtenaw County. Most of the graduates of that pilot program – Shifting Code – are now working for those companies. Similar courses have started in Detroit and Wayne and are expected to be offered in other cities around the state.

Software developer Alex Fisher, who became a full-time entrepreneur when he was laid off three years ago, was considering moving his web development and support company, Commercial Progression, to the Ann Arbor area. He talked with SPARK about what the area had to offer and a sticking point was the dearth of programmers who knew the website development tool, DRUPAL. SPARK business development specialist Brittany Affolter-Caine invited Fisher and other local companies looking for DRUPAL programmers to meet with the group and help guide the plan the Shifting Code talent enhancement course.

Fisher and others became an integral part of the team, helping to screen candidates, plan curriculum, and, in Fisher's case, even teach the early segments of the course until other suitable instructors were found at local universities and Washtenaw Community College.

One prospective student, Chris Teller, caught Fisher's eye during the screening process, which winnowed the field of candidates from more than 100 down to the 26 who eventually started and completed the course. Teller exhibited the initiative, strong interpersonal and analytical skills, flexibility, and incessant hunger for learning that the

ANN ARBOR

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employers prized. He also had been programming on his own.

Teller explained, "I had recently found myself unemployed after working pretty steadily for the last 12 years. I had been laid off before, but this one felt more permanent. I worked as an estimator for a construction company, but my real passion was technology. So, when I received the email from Michigan Works that this Shifting Code program was happening, I had to give it a shot. I was two hours away from where the presentation was happening, but that didn't matter to me. I learned at the presentation that the program would be concentrating on Drupal, which sold the whole thing for me: I am a huge fan of open-source software. I had been using Linux for over five years and the idea that [SPARK] would be teaching an open-source piece of software like Drupal really excited me."

Commenting on how the course changed his life, Teller said, "The obvious answer is that I found a new job with Commercial Progression as a Junior Drupal Developer, but beyond that I feel like I made some really great friends. I really looked forward coming to class even though my drive was so long. This summer I will be moving my family down to the Detroit area. We have lived in the Midland area for our

entire lives, so that will be a pretty big change."

Fisher said of Teller's new role in the company, "He's doing great, so far. He was one of the top students

in the class. We and another company were dancing around which of us would make an offer to him, then Chris reached out, asking to be placed with us, and that sealed the deal."

Part of the agreement employers enrolled in Shifting Code make is to continue the training of their new employees. Because Teller had been laid off for a significant amount of time, Fisher receives funds from Michigan Works to do on-the-job training (OJT) for six months. That helps him afford Teller as a full-time employee while the learning curve is still large.

Of the students in the class, Fisher said, "I think they did a great job. We threw a lot at them, including vocabulary, grammar, and understanding what you need to do to learn. We established a framework for learning so they could walk into a DRUPAL shop or business and hit the ground running."

Teller, too, commented on the breadth of the course content. "The only thing that I would change about the program is to have it concentrate on one thing. I would have preferred doing Drupal the entire time. We also learned C# and Java. It was nice to learn these, but in my opinion there was not enough time to get a good grasp on all three," Teller said.

Since completing the course in mid-April, 20 of the 26 participants have found related work, all of them in the Ann Arbor area, most with companies that received funding and/or services from SPARK.

More than 20 companies had been struggling to find the talent they needed, and were willing to look at candidates holistically and commit to continuing to teach them. SPARK helped them find non-traditional talent in a structured way. They interacted with the students in the pre-selection screening process and again in class during the second month of the course, when they pitched their companies to prospective employees. They were allowed to observe in class and spoke individually with the candidates during mixers at SPARK East, the Ypsilanti location where classes were held. SPARK mediated a structured, brokered matching of graduates and employers.

Commerce Guys, a seven-man shop in Jackson, hired four of the grads, two of whom qualified for the Michigan Works OJT program. Their Parisian headquarters had requested they relocate to the East or West coast. They bargained for Ann Arbor, citing the proximity of the airport, the now-available pool of DRUPAL programmers, and the support of SPARK.

Another Shifting Code program is planned for fall, though there will be a few adjustments and the language taught will be .NET instead of DRUPAL.

## KALE CHIPS RECIPE

BY KEN UEHARA  
ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER

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					1	9		
4			6	2	8			3
				5			2	
	5					2		7
	1	6				4	8	
9		8					6	
	6			8				
8			7	4	2			1
		9	5					

Fill in the squares so that each row, column, and 3-by-3 box contain the numbers 1 through 9.

- ACROSS
- Powerlifter Mendelson
  - Scamps
  - Needle, pinnacle in England
  - Fast food fare
  - Secluded area
  - Musical passage
  - Having pain
  - Singer Tennille
  - Object
  - Meat and potatoes dish
  - Protagonist
  - Greater in one dimension
  - Like most prime numbers
  - Avoid
  - Quintillion (prefix)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ and Archer, fictional detectives
  - Floating filth
  - Emulate a dog
  - Seed covering
  - Big
  - Biscuit
  - Wake
  - MLB center fielder Tommy
  - Containing moss
  - Internet company (abbr.)
  - Simmer
  - Actress Arthur
  - Respiration
  - Picture collection
  - Mode of transportation
  - Cognizant
  - Work for
  - Assist
  - Actor Auberjonois and namesakes
  - Actor Baldwin
  - Snout
  - Yields
  - Count
  - Small (suffix)

- DOWN
- Hiding place
  - Hiding place
  - Color
  - Type of dog that did not originate in France
  - Plan
  - Actor Roger
  - Body of water
  - Alpine equipment

Dog Days of Summer

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60						61					62			
63						64					65			

- Idea
- Pale
- Greek letter
- German number
- Droop
- Skin
- Feather
- City in Liguria
- Praise
- In an unrefined fashion
- Fastener
- Big
- City in Iran
- Before
- Passageway
- Herb
- Dog breed that did not originate in Denmark

- Machine tool
- Actor Sean
- Pressure
- Like rubber
- Concur
- Mushroom
- Clergyman
- Visitor
- \_\_\_\_\_ Lauder
- Time period
- Actor Alan
- Circle part
- Small
- Conjunction

Puzzle by Jeff Richmond

Cryptoquote

“IYNHFVX FN NGXXH QAM SYNFVQU; PYH FAIYNHFVX

FN JQDNJ QAM MFNVRDMQAH.”

—JXADB MQWFM HJRDXXQY

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While Groundcover News is a nonprofit organization and newspaper vendors are considered contracted self-employers, we still have expectations of how vendors should conduct themselves while selling and representing the paper.

The following list is our Vendor Code of Conduct, which every vendor reads and signs before receiving a badge and papers. We request that if you discover a vendor violating any tenets of the Code, please contact us and provide as many details as possible. Our paper and our vendors should be positively impacting our County.

All vendors must agree to the following code of conduct:

- Groundcover News will be distributed for a voluntary donation of \$1. I agree not to ask for more than a dollar or solicit donations by any other means.
- I will only sell current issues of Groundcover News.
- I agree not to sell additional goods or products when selling the paper or to panhandle, including panhandling with only one paper.
- I will wear and display my badge when selling papers.
- I will only purchase the paper from Groundcover News Staff and will not sell to or buy papers from other Groundcov-

er News vendors, especially vendors who have been suspended or terminated.

- I agree to treat all customers, staff and other vendors respectfully. I will not “hard sell,” threaten, harass or pressure customers, staff, or other vendors verbally or physically.
- I will not sell Groundcover News under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- I understand that I am not a legal employee of Groundcover News but a contracted worker responsible for my own well-being and income.
- I understand that my badge is property of Groundcover News and will not deface it. I will present my badge when purchasing the papers.
- I agree to stay off private property when selling Groundcover News.
- I understand to refrain from selling on public buses, federal property or stores unless there is permission from the owner.
- I agree to stay at least one block away from another vendor. I will also abide by the Vendor corner policy.

If you see any Groundcover News vendors not abiding by the code of conduct, please report the activity to: [contact@groundcovernews.com](mailto:contact@groundcovernews.com) 734-972-0926

Solutions on page 11



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## The Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice

by Lee Alexander  
Editor

The 1960s were an interesting time in the history of Ann Arbor. As one gravitational center for American peace activists opposing military involvement in Southeast Asia, the city sprung countless organizations dedicated to political reform. Few had the staying power of the Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice (ICPJ).

By the end of 1965 America was steadily being pulled deeper into the Vietnam conflict. It was during this period of escalation that a small group from the local Jewish, Christian, and Unitarian communities in Ann Arbor met to explore ideas for collaboration in opposition to the war. Their original mission was “to combat the twin evils of war and hunger.” Nearly five decades on, ICPJ’s work continues.

ICPJ focuses broadly on six target areas, one-third of which specifically address issues related to poverty and homelessness. The group leads a task force on hunger as well as one on racial and economic justice. The organization’s work reflects an international outlook but it very much approaches policy from a local perspective.

Chuck Warpehoski has been ICPJ’s director for nearly 10 years. His background cultivated valuable skills that he applies to his current work. “I had experience in community organizing,” Warpehoski said. “I had experience with faith communities. I’m a member of the Ann Arbor Friends Meeting, a Quaker group.

“My faith, it teaches me to be a peace-maker. It teaches me to work for justice and I get really angry when people use religion to promote intolerance, war, and oppression. The ability to both live my values and make sure there is a religious voice for justice and inclusion and peace – it’s been a great fit for me.”

When our nation’s economy began to slump a few years ago, local governments were hit hard. They looked for places to reduce budgets. Human services, often politically weak, are an easy target for cuts. When this reality began to emerge at the tail-end of last year, ICPJ helped lead a push back encouraging the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners to rethink its proposed drop in funding.

“When the City and the County were facing budget troubles,” Warpehoski said, “one of the first places they looked

to cut was services for people who are vulnerable. I think when our local community has so many people are in crisis, that’s the last place we should be cutting.

“We organized people to speak out at City Council, to speak out at the County Commission, to sign this sign-on letter, and show that there’s broad support for maintaining our social safety net. And it worked. The City and the County both went back and said, ‘We are going to continue to fund this.’”

One of the ICPJ’s tools against cuts was a sign-on letter that garnered broad support within both the faith community and the larger business community. Nearly 100 prominent local leaders agreed to come out in support of continuing human services funding. The letter, in part, read:

*Maintaining the social safety net is good policy. We are fortunate to have community leaders who understand that maintaining human services funding is not just an ethical response to increasing need, it is also sound public policy...*

*We recognize that you face difficult budget decisions, and we are grateful for your initial decision to avoid the devastating effects that could come from cutting funds to the most crucial support programs, such as those for children, people with mental illnesses, and the poor.*

Hunger and poverty typically go hand in hand. Food security and scarcity is not just a problem that impacts Third World economies. It is difficult for most of us to accept the troubling fact that our own neighbors might not have enough to eat. It is even harder when the burden falls on children, a situation



**CROP Walk gathering in the 1980s in front of the space shared by St. Clare’s Episcopal Church and Temple Beth Emeth.**

which happens all too often. We are fortunate to be part of a community that works hard to push back against the reality of persistent hunger. ICPJ works closely with other area organizations to see that everybody gets enough to eat.

The organization’s new program director, Bill Alt, puts a great deal of effort and energy into

heading their Hunger Task Force. Every fall, for 38 years, ICPJ has organized a local fundraising event called the CROP Hunger Walk (Community Response to Overcome Poverty). Ann Arbor’s CROP Walk is part of a nationwide effort to address global food security and support nutrition programs here and abroad. Last year’s local Walk raised nearly \$52,000. Twenty-five percent of the funds went to about a dozen local programs that tackle hunger within our area. The remainder is pooled together and used globally.

“The areas that I’m personally passionate about happen to coincide with one of the areas that I work on here,” Alt said. “These issues of hunger and food justice and how we raise food, how we develop food, and how people

have access to food. Also by thinking holistically about how all of our food choices, in the way that we produce our food, affect people – not just here locally, but also around the world.”

Faith in Food Gardens was a program ICPJ organized three years ago. The idea is to encourage places of worship to dedicate space on their properties to cultivating vegetable gardens. The idea is increasingly popular.

“Here are these communities,” Alt said, “and some of them have a lot of property. They have land that’s oftentimes devoted to grass, that’s just big lawns. The thought is, ‘could the faith community, could these churches and congregations come together and devote some of their property to raise food for the hungry, the most vulnerable in our communities?’ Three years ago we partnered with Food Gatherers to start this initiative, where we would encourage the congregations in Washtenaw County to do just that – to start a garden, whatever size that they want.”

Warpehoski added, “This is local, fresh, healthy food, which is some of the hardest food for the food banks to acquire.”

The Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice is an organization born of an era of idealistic optimism. The turmoil of the Vietnam era created a generation that not only witnessed war and violence but believed in the transformative power of cooperation, collaboration and the power of community built on shared values. Today, with most of ICPJ’s original peers no longer operating, it is refreshing to see a seasoned group carry forward this vision and to see its leadership develop, taken up by a new generation.



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## Book review: The Housing Boom and Bust

by Thomas Sowell

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by David KE Dodge  
Groundcover Contributor

Concerning the recent financial crisis, Thomas Sowell, in his preface to *The Housing Boom and Bust*, wrote: "There was no single, dramatic event that set this off... A whole series of very questionable decisions by many people, in many places, over a period of years, built up the pressures that led to a sudden collapse of the housing market and of financial institutions that began to fall like dominoes as a result of investing in securities based on housing prices."

Sowell is just one of many writers, broadcasters, politicians, prominent businessmen, government regulators, and other public figures who have offered the world an accounting of what led the world into the "Great Recession." I have had my own fair share of exposure to such media coverage, but when I became aware that Thomas Sowell, a Fellow at the Hoover Institute at Stanford University, had written the book here reviewed, I put that title on my "must read" list. I've known Sowell to be an author on various topics of economic, social, and political affairs who always provided me with information and analysis that was fresh to its topic, exceptional in its conclusions, and often, disillusioning to my settled world-view. I read *The Housing Boom and Bust* hoping for such and was not disappointed.



Economist and theorist, Thomas Sowell

Sowell shows that the sky-rocketing costs of homes at the turn of the century was generally restricted to relatively few parts of the United States. In those areas it was largely attributable to zoning and other politically-imposed restrictions on land use, rendering a shortage of land in those areas available for housing development and causing the price of such land to go up. In regions of the country where such politically-created shortages of real estate were not imposed, housing prices remained pretty much constant, or even slightly decreased.

The collapse of housing markets and the financial sector, attributed by some of the political elite to gouging by free market participants, appears, if Sowell is correct, more attributable to a short-circuiting of the very same free markets by government. Sowell asserts that regulation of banking and other financial institutions by government agencies, as devised and directed by overzealous policy makers and enforcers in Congress and the White House, as well as state and local governments, had no small role to play in the financial collapse.

Prior to reading this book, I had formed the impression that the collapse could have been avoided, had only adequate regulation been brought to bear earlier – certainly, during the administration of George W. Bush. Though I had been exposed to discomfiting news about the activities of the Clinton administration, the impression I maintained was that Clinton at least had a sensible appreciation of the importance of regulation of the private sector, in general, as necessary for the well-being of the commonweal of the people of the United States.

*The Housing Boom and Bust* did much to shed the scales from my eyes as to just what had (or, hadn't) occurred in the way of regulation of various for-profit players in the U.S. housing market.

As Professor Stanley Liebowitz of the University of Texas at Dallas, quoted in Sowell's book, puts it (p.68): "From the current handwringing, you'd think that the banks came up with the idea of looser underwriting standards on their own, with regulators just asleep on the job. Government was not passively inefficient. It was actively zealous in promoting risky mortgage lending practices."

Sowell picks up here, adding that, "Widespread calls for more or better regulation do not come to grips with the fact that there is no such thing as generic 'regulation.'"

"As we have already seen, government regulation and intervention have been at the heart of the conditions that set the stage for the current housing market disaster. That does not mean that all regulation must be futile or counterproductive. What it does mean is that the specifics of any proposed regulation are crucial. Among those specifics must be answers to such questions as: Regulate with what powers? With what insulation from political interference? With what accountability for what results? Such specifics would tell us much more than political rhetoric about a need for

more generic 'regulation'" (p.69).

Sowell begins the last chapter of his book with a quote: "A historian once said: 'Bad ages to live through are good ages to learn from.'" Just as Sowell's view that government

interference in free markets is most responsible for the current recession diverges from conventional opinion, Sowell is bold in refuting prevailing wisdom as to what course of action is necessary to bring the United States back to prosperity. Conventional wisdom is that President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal spending is to be credited with ending the Depression. Sowell is apparently among a growing number of modern economists departing from such "wisdom." Instead, he mentions several different, and disparate, factors that converged to end the Depression in 1941/42:

- the draft of 12 million men from the workforce, to fight World War II
- the transition of government from an anti-business stance to a pro-business stance, as capital equipment was put to essential, profitable use, meeting an insatiable demand for war material
- the transition from a period of social experimenting, with its consequential instability of conditions in which to invest, to a period of predictable, stable conditions, conducive to spending money, apparently both on the part of consumers, and investors.

In short, one lesson Sowell draws from the Great Depression, as to how to best end the current economic malaise, is to not engage in copious stimulus spending. It didn't work during the Great Depression, and Sowell saw no prospect of it working in 2009, when he prepared his book to go to print.

To place a cap on this review: *The Housing Boom and Bust* is a delightful read. Ann Arbor District Library has one copy, currently at the downtown branch.



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# The Dalai Lama: Tibet’s spiritual leader reflects on homelessness

continued from page 5

issues that would otherwise go unreported. What stories regarding your own country are the most important ones that need to be told?

A: As for the Tibetan issue, it is that the very nature of the Tibetan struggle is strictly non-violent and very much in the spirit of reconciliation. Therefore, our struggle needs worldwide support. It must succeed, because if it fails, it will encourage those people who carry a different method, including force and violence.

Also, some aspect of the Tibetan story is not just a political matter, but an environmental issue. The Tibetan Plateau [part of the Himalayas] plays a greatly important role in global warming. Nearly all major rivers in that part of the world arise on the Tibetan Plateau, so the preservation of Tibetan ecology is not only in Tibetan people’s interest. More than one billion people’s lives depend on these rivers.

Another top priority is the preservation of Tibetan culture, which is a culture of peace, a culture of non-violence and compassion. It is not only an ancient culture, but also one that is very relevant in today’s world. We live in an increasingly materialistic world, which is all about consumerism. And there are moral problems which sometimes lead to violence, particularly among the youth. Whenever they face problems, the response of some of them has become more violent.

Q: Would you see the riots that happened in the UK last summer as an example of that?

A: Yes, that is one indication. When

I first heard that through the BBC, I was shocked. I considered people in the UK to be more mature and more peaceful. So when I heard the news, I was surprised and shocked. This shows that you should not take things for granted or follow your past way of thinking. Now, we have to think more seriously about our social and cultural environment.

Q: In your autobiography you refer to the invaluable experiences you had when you traveled in disguise. You said it was a chance to find out “what life was really like” for your fellow countrymen and women. You have now been in exile for over 50 years and have become one of the world’s most recognizable global figures. How do you manage to stay connected to the lives of ordinary people inside and outside Tibet?

A: Inside Tibet, there were a few occasions whilst traveling where I was mixing with ordinary people. Some people asked me, “Where is the Dalai Lama?” Then I told them, “Oh, the Dalai Lama is over there.” Then, afterwards, I held a public meeting and I recognized one lady whom I had talked to in disguise. When she saw my face and realized it was the same person, she could not believe it [laughter]. Such things were always quite fun. My main motivation for mixing with them was to get clear

information about what was going on. When people know you are the Dalai Lama they may not be as frank as to an ordinary monk.

Living in a free country, my contact with people is open. For my part, I try to meet people on the level of human beings. And from the responses from the audiences I meet nowadays, it seems that they also have that kind of attitude towards me. That means I get the right information and a real picture of the reality. In the past, even my

own officials answered not very clearly if I asked them about something. So I always asked the sweepers, who were uneducated, innocent people. They would always tell me whatever

they had heard straightforwardly, including criticism about a Regent, criticism about some high officials and high Lamas. They had no hesitation to tell me all the negative things like that [laughter].

[His Holiness, looking amused, suddenly switches to Tibetan and recalls a story to his translator. His infectious smile makes everyone laugh, and then the translator repeats:] “The sweepers would start off politely by using the official salute for Regents and high Lamas, like ‘bless him,’ and then go on to tell me all the criticism about them [more laughter].”

[When the laughter dies down, we are informed that our time with His Holiness is up. We have just time for one last question, which we dedicate to our vendors.]

Q: Our street paper vendors around the world face different kinds of social and economic difficulties, but when asked what the hardest thing about their situation is, their answer is often the same: the feeling of loneliness. A search party recognized you as the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama when you were two years old; you spent your childhood amongst adults in monasteries and faced the huge responsibility of protecting your people from foreign invasion and being their spiritual leader at age fifteen. With your experience of loneliness in your life, what advice would you give to them?

A: In my own case, if I only think of myself as “I am a Tibetan” or “I am Buddhist,” that in itself creates a kind of distance. So I say to myself: “Forget that, I am a human being, one of the seven billion human beings.” By saying that, we immediately become closer. If people put the emphasis on their situation by thinking “I am poor,” or “I am homeless” or “I am in a difficult situation,” they put too much of an emphasis on a secondary level. I think that this also is a reality, but still another reality is that we all are a human being, one of the 7 billion human beings on this planet. I know that in a practical sense that might not be of much help, but emotionally, it can be very helpful.

Source: [www.street-papers.org/INSP](http://www.street-papers.org/INSP)

Photographs by Simon Murphy, [www.simonmurphyphotographer.com](http://www.simonmurphyphotographer.com)

## Cryptoquote Solution

“Justice is sweet and musical; but injustice is harsh and discordant.”  
— Henry David Thoreau

S	C	O	T		I	M	P	S		N	A	P	E	S
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1	4	9	5	6	3	8	7	2



## Film review: The Secret World of Arrietty



by James Manning  
Groundcover  
Vendor

Released February 17, 2012  
by Walt Disney Studios  
Directed by Gary Rydstrom  
Rating: G

I usually don't catch a movie at the theaters. However, a few months ago, perhaps out of boredom, I decided to go to the Quality 16. I was outside the theater looking at what was playing when one poster caught my attention. The art style looked very familiar to me. I checked the credits, and sure enough, another Hayao Miyazaki film had been released. So I purchased a ticket for *The Secret World of Arrietty*.

*Arrietty* is based on Mary Norton's novel *The Borrowers*, which I used to read when I was younger. Having seen previous Miyazaki films, I thought to myself, "Wow! This is definitely right up his alley!" – and I knew that I was in for a beautiful film. It was, so now there is one more anime film I have fallen in love with. To this day there has not been a single Miyazaki film that I did not love.

It hit me as a strange coincidence that I, being of Irish decent and having grown up with such folklore, have lived here in Ann Arbor for the last two years, aware of the fairy doors in the downtown area. Strange it seems that here and



now is when I saw such a film. Afterwards, when I got back downtown, I actually placed my ticket stub from the theater on a fairy door. Then again, I had to: you can't leave a Miyazaki film behind without a sense of nostalgia.

Like all Miyazaki films, the story is about the power of friendship and trust between two people, regardless of the differences in their worlds or points of view. The story, animation and soundtrack were all brilliant. This film is yet another successful addition to the Miyazaki collection. Some of his previous films include *Ki Ki's Delivery Service*, *Castle in the Sky*, *Howl's Moving Castle*, *Spirited Away* and my personal favorite, *Princess Mononoke*.

All of these films are very well done and are perfect for families. As a matter of fact, Disney picked up Miyazaki for his

last couple of films. With Miyazaki being one of today's best anime directors/producers, I thought it was a very smart move for them. I was afraid for a minute that Disney was just gonna stick to all their Pixar films. True, Disney is not about to go bankrupt anytime soon, but I was losing interest in their films with

them sticking with CGI all the time.

I shouldn't have to say this at this point; nonetheless: I do highly recommend *The Secret World of Arrietty* for anyone looking for a good, recently-released film.

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<p>Wow, 100 degree temps. We're really in the dog days of summer.</p> <p>What?!? Dogs get their own days now?</p>	<p>Calm down, it's only an expression for those hot days when you just want to lie around like a dog.</p> <p>So even though we lie around at least as well as dogs, cats get ignored?</p>	<p>Look, there's no point in getting upset that you're not associated with some of the worst days of the year. Black cats like you get better PR on Halloween.</p> <p>That's just one day. I want something like the cat days of Fall.</p>	<p>In the grand scheme of things every day is Cat Day.</p> <p>Oh please. Next you'll tell me every day is Kids Day. I may be young, but I'm not falling for rehashed clichés like that. I once suffered an entire day with an empty food bowl. Trust me, it was no picnic!</p>
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